

## 9. Significant Irreversible Changes Due to the Proposed Project

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Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describe any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project should it be implemented. Specifically, the CEQA Guidelines state:

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highways improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Generally, a project would result in significant irreversible environmental changes if:

- The primary and secondary impacts would generally commit future generations to similar uses;
- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources;
- The project would involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project; or
- The proposed irretrievable commitments of nonrenewable resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy).

In the case of the proposed Ontario Ranch Business Park Specific Plan project, its implementation would involve a land use, development, and implementation framework to support 1,905,027 square feet of warehouse and office uses within the City of Ontario. Significant irreversible changes that would be caused by implementation of the proposed project would be:

- Construction activities that would entail the commitment of nonrenewable and/or slowly renewable energy resources; human resources; and natural resources such as lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, steel, copper, lead, other metals, water, and fossil fuels.
- Operation that would require the use of natural gas and electricity, petroleum-based fuels, fossil fuels, and water. The commitment of resources required for the operation of the project would limit the availability of such resources for future generations or for other uses during the life of the project.

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- Increased traffic on area roadways (see Section 5.14, *Transportation*);
  - Emissions of air pollutants associated with operation (see Section, 5.2, *Air Quality*);
  - Consumption of non-renewable energy associated with operation of the Specific Plan due to the use of automobiles, lighting, heating and cooling systems, and appliances (see Sections 5.5, *Energy*, and 5.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*).
- An increased commitment of social services and public maintenance services (e.g., police, fire, sewer, and water services) would also be required. The energy and social service commitments would be long-term obligations in view of the low likelihood of returning the land to its original condition once it has been developed.
  - Employment growth related to project implementation would increase vehicle trips over the long term. Emissions associated with such vehicle trips would continue to contribute to the South Coast Air Basin's nonattainment designations for ozone, particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), under the California and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS), and nonattainment for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) under the California AAQS.

Given the low likelihood that the land would revert to lower intensity uses or to its current form, the proposed project would generally commit future generations to these environmental changes. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, Ontario Ranch Business Park is committed to sustainable design strategies that integrate principles of environmental stewardship into the design and construction process. Appropriate strategies will be determined for each project within the Specific Plan area. Strategies include, but are not limited to:

### Sustainable Construction & Technology Concepts

- Design and construct energy efficient buildings to reduce air, water, and land pollution and environmental impacts from energy production and consumption.
- Employ passive design including skylights, building orientation, landscaping, and strategic colors to improve building energy performance.
- Reduce the heat island effect by providing shade structures and trees that produce large canopies. In addition, choose roof and paving materials that possess a high level of solar reflectivity (cool roofs).
- Use recycled and other environmentally friendly building materials, wherever possible.
- Incorporate skylights into at least two percent of warehouse/distribution building roof area to provide natural light and reduce electric lighting demand.
- Use energy efficient LED (or similar) products.
- Provide interior or exterior bicycle storage consistent with the California Green Building Standards Code.

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- Use drought tolerant landscaping with drip irrigation and include plantings such as trees, shrubs, groundcovers and/or vines. Optional amenities include benches, trellises, thematic fencing, and decorative walkways.
- Employ high performance dual pane window glazing in office storefronts.

### Water Quality

- Utilize landscape areas including retention/infiltration swales and basins or biotreatment when infiltration is infeasible, as required by the San Bernardino County MS4 Permit and Water Quality Management Plan.
- Select native and drought tolerant plants to reduce water demand.
- Integrate permeable pavement and perforated curbs throughout the project area as feasible to allow stormwater to enter planter areas, assist with filtration and control runoff.
- Use captured runoff to augment irrigation systems whenever possible.
- Employ irrigation systems that respond to changing weather conditions, irrigate by hydrozone, and use micro-irrigation techniques.
- Use recycled water to irrigate landscape areas and for other appropriate uses. The use of recycled water for certain purposes is required by the City of Ontario Recycled Water Master Plan

The commitment of resources to the proposed project is not unusual or inconsistent with projects of this type and scope. However, once these commitments are made, it is improbable that the project area would revert back to its current condition. Thus, the proposed project would result in significant irreversible changes to the environment throughout the lifespan of the structures.

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